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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/782,899	02/23/2004	Minoru Fujimori	2004_0290	5937

7590 10/02/2007
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EXAMINER

LONG, SCOTT

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1633

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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10/02/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Art Unit: 1633

DETAILED ACTION

The examiner acknowledges receipt of IDS, Applicant's Remarks and Claim Amendments filed 8/6/2007.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 8/6/2007 has been entered.

Claim Status

Claims 28, 31-33 are amended. Claims 1-27 and 29 are canceled. Claims 28 and 30-46 are under current examination.

Priority

This application claims benefit as a Continuation of U.S. Application No. 09/816,391 filed 26 March 2001 (abandoned). The instant application also claims benefit from foreign application JAPAN 2000-287688 filed 12 September 2000. The

Art Unit: 1633

applicant has submitted a certified English translation of foreign application (JAPAN 2000-287688). Consequently, the application has been granted the benefit date, 12 September 2000, from foreign application JAPAN 2000-287688.

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, second paragraph

The Applicant's arguments (Remarks, page 10) and claim amendments (filed 8/6/2007) regarding rejection of claim 32 under 35 USC 112, 2nd paragraph have been fully considered and are persuasive.

The claim amendments make the rejection moot, therefore, the examiner hereby withdraws the rejection of claim 32 under 35 USC 112, 2nd paragraph

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, first paragraph (written description)

The Applicant's arguments (Remarks, pages 10-11) and claim amendments (filed 8/6/2007) regarding rejection of claim 32 under 35 USC 112, 1st paragraph have been fully considered and are persuasive.

The claim amendments, removing the claim language, "derived from" make the rejection moot, therefore, the examiner hereby withdraws the rejection of claim 32 under 35 USC 112, 1st paragraph (written description).

Art Unit: 1633

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, first paragraph (written description)

The Applicant's arguments (Remarks, pages 5-8) and claim amendments (filed 8/6/2007) regarding rejection of claims 28 and 30-34 under 35 USC 112, 1st paragraph (written description) have been fully considered and are persuasive.

The claim amendments to claim 28 have narrowed the scope of the genus of promoters to a genus sufficiently narrow, so that a skilled artisan can reasonably say that the applicant is in possession of the claimed genus of promoters. The working examples which utilize SEQ ID NO:1 are clearly representative species of promoter and terminator of the claimed genus. Furthermore, the applicant has provided references that indicate a strong evolutionary conservation among histone-like binding proteins found in the genus *Bifidobacterium*. Because the single working example is a clearly representative species of promoter from a well characterized genus, the examiner finds that the applicant has overcome the rejection.

Therefore, the examiner hereby withdraws the rejection of claims 28 and 30-34 under 35 USC 112, 1st paragraph (written description).

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The Applicant's arguments (Remarks, pages 5-8) and claim amendments (filed 8/6/2007) regarding rejection of claims 28 and 30-46 under 35 USC 103 have been fully considered and are persuasive.

Art Unit: 1633

The applicant argues that limitations of the newly amended claim 28 are not taught by Yazawa et al. (Proceedings of the American Association for Cancer Research Annual Meeting, Vol. 40, pp. 88, 1999) in view of Brown et al. (US applic. 2003/0103952). The applicant concurs, that the newly amended limitations are not taught by the Yazawa in view of Brown.

Therefore, the examiner hereby withdraws the rejection of claims 28 and 30-34 under 35 USC 103.

NEW REJECTIONS

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or non-obviousness.

Art Unit: 1633

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 28 and 30-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yazawa et al. (Proceedings of the American Association for Cancer Research Annual Meeting, Vol. 40, pp. 88, 1999) in view of Brown et al. (US applic. 2003/0103952) and further in view of Natori et al. (Biochimie. Volume 70, Issue 12, December 1988, Pages 1765-1774).

Yazawa teaches using *Bifidobacterium longum* as a gene delivery vector for treating cancer in a buffer or solution, (that is, a pharmaceutical preparation). However, Yazawa does not specifically teach introducing a DNA coding for a protein having an activity of converting a precursor of an anti-tumor substance into the anti-tumor substance into a tumor using *Bifidobacterium longum*.

However, at the time the invention was made, introducing a DNA coding for a protein having an activity of converting a precursor of an anti-tumor substance into the anti-tumor substance into a tumor using a genetically modified bacterium was well known to one of ordinary skill in the art as exemplified by Brown (columns 1-26). Brown

Art Unit: 1633

teaches using a genetically modified bacterium to deliver an enzyme to the hypoxic/necrotic environment of a tumor and systemically administering a pro-drug, which is converted at the site of the tumor to the toxic agent by the enzyme (columns 25-26). The enzyme/prodrug combination can be selected from following: nitroreductase/CB1954; cytosine deaminase/5-fluorocytosine; beta-glucuronidase/glucuronidated anticancer drugs (columns 5-6).

Neither Yazawa et al. nor Brown et al. teach utilizing the strong promoter, histone-like DNA binding protein (HU) promoter, in recombinant *Bifidobacterium longum* in order to express anti-tumor genes.

However, the HU promoter was known as in the art as a promoter which highly expresses HU protein in *Bifidobacterium longum* (Natori et al.). However, utilizing the strong promoter, histone-like DNA binding protein (HU) promoter, in recombinant *Bifidobacterium longum* in order to express anti-tumor genes was not performed by any other researchers at the time of the filing. The examiner still believes that it is obvious to use *Bifidobacterium longum* as a vehicle for delivery of cancer therapeutics.

It would have been *prima facie* obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teaching of Yazawa taken with Brown and Natori, namely to use a genetically modified *Bifidobacterium longum* comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a protein having an activity of converting a precursor of an anti-tumor substance into the anti-tumor substance in a method to treat tumor tissues under anaerobic conditions and further using the HU promoter to express the anti-tumor substances.

Art Unit: 1633

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to introduce the DNA encoding a protein having an activity of converting a precursor of an anti-tumor substance into the anti-tumor substance into tumor tissues under anaerobic conditions using the genetically modified bacterium because the bacterium is a nonpathogenic anaerobic bacterium, which can selectively localize to solid tumors in an individual after systemic application and pro-drug cancer therapy was well known to one of ordinary skill in the art for treating tumor tissue.

In addition, it would have been *prima facie* obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teaching of Yazawa taken with Brown, namely to use any enzyme/prodrug combination in the method to treat tumor tissues under anaerobic conditions. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated, as a matter of designer's choice, to use an enzyme/prodrug combination selected from following: nitroreductase/CB1954; cytosine deaminase/5-fluorocytosine; beta-glucuronidase/glucuronidated anticancer drugs because the enzyme/prodrug combinations were well known to one of ordinary skill in the art for treating hypoxic tumor tissue.

In addition, it would have been *prima facie* obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teaching of Yazawa taken with Brown and Natori, namely to use an expression vector that has a HU promoter and terminator that function in a Bifidobacterium. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to use a histone-like binding protein promoter and terminator of Bifidobacterium because one of ordinary skill in the art understands that a promoter and

Art Unit: 1633

a terminator are required for the vector to express the protein of interest. Furthermore, having a promoter which expresses an important protein such as those interacting with histones could provide high levels of expression of the anti-tumor substance.

Therefore the invention as a whole would have been *prima facie* obvious to one ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Conclusion

No claims are allowed.

Art Unit: 1633

Examiner Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Scott Long** whose telephone number is **571-272-9048**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Joseph Weitach** can be reached on **571-272-0739**. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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JLE